

@GCnewsroom Tweet (INET POSTWEB publishes):

Canada supports Cowessess First Nation's Gravesite Reclamation Project to locate and commemorate residential school missing children. @GCIndigenous

Taking care: We recognize that this statement comes at a time that is difficult for many and that our efforts to honour victims and families may act as an unwelcome reminder for those who have suffered hardships through generations of government policies that were harmful to Indigenous Peoples. A support line is available for former residential school students and their families for support, emotional and crisis referral services. You can also find information on how to obtain other health support from the Government of Canada.

Please call the National Residential School Crisis Line at 1-866-925-4419 if you or someone you know is triggered while reading this.

We encourage all those who need some support at this time to reach out and know that support is always there for you through the Hope for Wellness Help Line at 1-855-242-3310 (toll-free) or the online chat at hopeforwellness.ca, open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

News release

For immediate release

Canada supports Cowessess First Nation's Gravesite Reclamation Project at the site of former residential school

December 15, 2021 — Cowessess First Nation, Traditional Territory of the Cree and Saulteaux people (Treaty 4), Saskatchewan — Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada

The locating of unmarked graves at former residential school sites across Canada are tragic reminders of the abuse Indigenous children suffered in those institutions. As part of efforts to address historical wrongs and the lasting physical, emotional, mental and spiritual harms related to the legacy of residential schools, our government is working with Survivors, Indigenous leaders, and affected families and communities, including Cowessess First Nation in Saskatchewan. Together, we will undertake the difficult work of finding and commemorating missing children who were taken from their families to attend residential schools, such as the former Marieval Residential School.

Today, Chief Cadmus Delorme of Cowessess First Nation, and the Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, announced funding of \$703,230 over three years for the community's Gravesite Reclamation Project following the news in June that as many as 751 unmarked graves were located near the former Marieval Residential School. Survivors, intergenerational Survivors, knowledge keepers and leaders will continue the work that has already started on researching, commemorating, locating and identifying the gravesites of missing children at the Marieval site. During the next three years, work will progress on research, archival and statement gathering, additional fieldwork, commemorative markers, electronic mapping of all marked and unmarked graves, and a monument.



This community-led process will support Cowessess First Nation in undertaking this work in their own way and at their own pace.

Addressing the harms suffered by Survivors, their families and communities is at the heart of reconciliation and is essential to renew and rebuild relationships with Indigenous Peoples, their families and communities, governments, and all Canadians.

Quotes

“Cowessess First Nation moved forward to honour the unmarked graves at the former Roman Catholic Church-run grave site located beside the Marieval Residential School. The end goal is to identify a name for each unmarked grave, and will be a place to honour the ones who went before us and provide a place of healing for ones impacted by the unmarked graves. The Cowessess First Nation’s technical and research team continue towards this end goal. This investment on behalf of Canada will assure we get to our end goal.”

Cadmus Delorme
Chief Cowessess First Nation

“As we reflect on the first National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, we remember the significance of the day in commemorating the history and ongoing impacts of residential schools. Canadians are beginning to understand and recognize the tragic legacy these schools have left. Our hearts are with Cowessess First Nation as they search for their missing children and continue on their healing journey.”

The Honourable Marc Miller,
Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations

“As Cowesses First Nation undertakes their important work of identifying and honouring those in unmarked graves, the Federal Government will remain steadfast in our support to Chief Delorme and the community. We cannot forget how the horrific legacy of colonialism through Residential Schools continues to this day, and that we must support communities in their efforts by implementing the Truth & Reconciliation Commissions’ Calls to Action.”

The Honourable Patty Hajdu
Minister of Indigenous Services

Quick facts

- On August 10, 2021, the Government of Canada announced approximately \$320 million in additional support for Indigenous-led, Survivor-centric and culturally informed initiatives and investments to help Indigenous communities respond to and heal from the ongoing impacts of residential schools.
- To date, \$116.8 million has been committed to support First Nation, Inuit and Métis Survivors, their families and communities in locating and commemorating missing



children who attended residential schools, responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action 72 to 76.

- A [National Residential School Crisis Line](#) is available to provide support to former residential school students. You can access emotional and crisis referral services by calling the 24-Hour National Crisis Line at 1-866-925-4419.
- The [Hope for Wellness Help Line](#) is also available at 1-855-242-3310 or via the online chat function on their website.

Associated links

[Residential Schools Missing Children – Community Support Funding](#)
[Government of Canada enhances support to Indigenous communities to respond to and heal from the ongoing impacts of residential schools - Canada.ca](#)
[Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program](#)
[Missing Children and Burial Information – Calls to Action 72-76](#)

- 30 -

For more information, media may contact:

Renelle Arsenault
Director of Communications
Office of the Honourable Marc Miller
Minister of Crown–Indigenous Relations
renelle.arsenault@sac-isc.gc.ca

Media Relations
Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
819-934-2302
RCAANC.media.CIRNAC@canada.ca

Andrew MacKendrick
Office of the Honourable Patty Hajdu
Minister of Indigenous Services
andrew.mackendrick2@sac-isc.gc.ca

Media Relations
Indigenous Services Canada
819-953-1160
SAC.media.ISC@canada.ca

Annette M. Ermine
Communications Specialist
Cowessess First Nation #73
306-696-2520
Cell: 639-205-7041
annette.ermine@cowessessfn.com



Stay connected

Join the conversation about Indigenous Peoples in Canada:

Twitter: [@GCIndigenous](#)

Facebook: [@GCIndigenous](#)

Instagram: [@gcindigenous](#)

NOTE: If another set of social media handles (partner, stakeholder, Indigenous community etc) are to be included, please provide separately below:

Twitter:

Facebook:

Instagram:

You can subscribe to receive our news releases and speeches via RSS feeds. For more information or to subscribe, visit www.cirnac.gc.ca/RSS

Photo and/or Video

(include caption, including names of people in the photo)